

# Axe attack changes Miguel's life

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AN axe attack tends to concentrate the mind, so Miguel Dean could be grateful to the fellow squatter who set about him in an Edinburgh tenement a dozen years ago.

The cause of the argument was immaterial. "There is always violence when people with drink and drug problems are together," he explained.

Fortunately, in this case, it subsided before serious harm was done, but alarm bells sounded in Miguel. There had to be a better way than living like that.

For Miguel, who dragged himself up from the gutter to become a leading academic, there was a way.

This son of a Spanish mother and English father has become an expert in tackling challenging behaviour, a coach and mentor.

Miguel now lives in Malvern and among a raft of talents, specialises in one-to-one sessions with difficult children and young adults, anger management and confidence building.

As his CV says, his own experiences have put him in the perfect position to do what he does.

Born in Colchester, Miguel's mother died within a year and he moved to Staffordshire with his father, but an unsettled home life led to an unsettled school life. He dropped out, quit the classroom and went to Israel to work on a kibbutz.

The next eight years were spent travelling. For five months he lived homeless on the streets of Edinburgh.

It was then someone tried to reshape him with an axe.

"I realised I had to get out of there before something really serious happened," said Miguel.

"I'd met a woman who had friends in Herefordshire and we moved to live outside Ledbury and I worked on a farm."

It was the start of his life's upturn. Eleven years ago he moved into a flat in Colwall and set about getting qualifications.

As he sees it, society today is changing at a pace schools cannot keep up with, and most professionals simply aren't equipped with the emotional literacy to tackle the problem.

"When a child shows challenging behaviour, he's saying 'my needs aren't being met – please meet my needs'," Miguel explained. According to Miguel, there's a diamond in every piece of coal.

He said: "My style of coaching has grown out of my experiences and is underpinned by the belief that everyone has the resources to fulfill their own potential."

For more information, go to his website at [migueldean.co.uk](http://migueldean.co.uk).

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